

September 2005

Volume 1, Issue 1



Special Interest Articles:

- Launch of the Cost of Disorders of the Brain in Europe at European Parliament
- The Real Cost of Brain Disorders in the European Union
- EBC establishes Brussels office

EBC Launches the Costs of Disorders of the Brain in Europe at the European Parliament



Brussels: The European Brain Council launched the 'Costs of Disorders of the Brain in Europe' report at the European Parliament in Brussels on 26 April 2005. Hosted by Mr. John Bowis, MEP (photo above), the launch marked the endpoint of the work coordinated by EBC in partnership with Stockholm Health Economics to evaluate the actual costs associated with brain disorders in the European Union.

Funded by the Danish pharma company, H. Lundbeck, this research looked at the cost of disorders of the brain in Europe in 2004. In 28 countries, with a population of 466 million, more than 100 million were affected by at least one brain disorder. The total annual cost was €386 billion. Brain research funding, health care resource allocation and teaching at medical schools are proportionately much smaller. The huge cost and burden of brain disorders calls for increased efforts in research, health care and teaching.

Mr. John Bowis, MEP, speaking at the launch, noted that "The study *Cost of disorders of the brain in Europe* clearly demonstrates that brain disorders should be a subject for further research. Affecting 127 million people and amounting €386 billion it is imperative that brain research is supported with more benevolence – nationally and on an EU level. The return on investment appears to be huge economically as well as with respect to the quality of life improvements that patients will experience due to a better understanding of brain diseases".

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The Real Cost of Brain Disorders in Europe – Some Facts and Figures



The EBC 'Costs' study is based on an holistic view of costs, involving healthcare cost (e.g. hospital care, ambulatory care and drugs), private and public costs outside the medical sector (e.g. nursing home costs and services/goods for private homes) and indirect costs (e.g. limits on work capability, absenteeism and early retirement). It provides a unique insight into the total cost of disorders of the brain in Europe in 2004. The results are overwhelming: Across the 28 countries involved (population 466 million), 127 million people are affected by a brain disorder (equals 27 % of the population). This amounts to a total European cost of €386 billion.



This total cost can be divided into: €135 billion on direct medical expenditures, €179 billion on indirect costs and €72 billion on direct non-medical costs. The €386 billion equals €829 per European inhabitant, and corresponds to the cost of more than 25 channel tunnels.

These numbers underline that disorders of the brain are indeed the most burdensome and costly group of diseases in Europe today. Yet the study also points to the fact that brain research only received 8 % of the life science budget in the EU 5th Framework Programme. This constitutes 0.01% of the annual cost of brain disorders for that period.

The discrepancy between the impact and the spending on these diseases is alarming. The impact, as the study emphasizes, is enormous. Despite this the area receives only 12% of the direct health care spending and 8 % of the total drug expenses. The latter constitutes only 3% of the cost of brain diseases per year, explains Professor Jes Olesen, president of the European Brain Council, and may reflect the relative invisibility of brain disorders, both physically, and at policy level.

From Top:

Commissioner Potocnik, Prof. Jes Olesen, President, EBC

Right: Ms. Mary Baker, Vice President EBC and president EFNA with Dr. Quintana-Trias from the European Commission's DG Research



More than 100 million Europeans are affected by at least one brain disorder (EBC Cost of Disorders of the Brain in Europe, 2005)

President's Letter

EBC: Our Research Activities

The Costs of Disorders of the Brain in Europe is the second of four strands of research that EBC has engaged with since our establishment in 2002. The first strand was the 'Burden of Brain Disorders in Europe' (Olesen and Leonardi 2003 (available on the EBC website)).

This was followed by the work that led to the launch of the 'Cost of Disorders of the Brain in Europe' report that we are reporting on here. Since the launch of the 'Costs' document in April, more than 2,000 copies have been disseminated to EBC member organizations, MEPs, national parliamentarians and policy makers, European Commission officials, patient organizations across Europe and other relevant European NGOs.

We believe that the Costs document is playing its part in convincing the European Union Institutions that brain research and brain disease deserves more attention than it has hitherto received, with the result that the Framework 7 Programme now makes explicit reference to brain research and brain disease.

Our task does not end there. We need to go further and demonstrate the range of research themes that stakeholders want to see funded, at both national and European level. We are currently compiling a white paper that is currently being compiled by representatives of EBC's member organizations on over 50 key themes, ranging from molecule to man. This document will be ready for publication in early 2006, and will, we suggest, serve as a blueprint for where European research will go in the coming decades.

EBC is also working on another joint project with Stockholm Health Economics, this time focusing on the resource allocation to brain research in Europe. Results from this project will be available in 2006.

Jes Olesen

President, EBC

"The health care area comprises a large portion of the budget in all European countries. It is therefore of great importance to clarify facts and data regarding the cost of different diseases. The present report elucidates an important field, brain disorders. It clearly indicates the scale of the challenge we are facing, both in respect to individual suffering and to the socio-economic costs caused by brain diseases". European Commissioner for Science & Research, Mr. Janez Potocnik



Photo:

Prof. Jes Olesen,
President EBC
Presents
Commissioner
Potocnik (centre)
with a copy of the
Costs document
with Prof. Tamas
Freund (EBC).

European Brain Council (EBC)

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National Brain Councils- Update

The past year has seen the development of the idea of national brain councils in several countries, following the principles espoused by the European Brain Council. Bringing together stakeholders from basic neuroscience, industry and patient organizations, national brain councils are having an impact in countries like Belgium, the Netherlands, and most

recently, Hungary. The next edition of European Brain Council Update will bring you special reports from a range of National Brain Councils.

If you would like to make a contribution to this special edition, please contact us at:

ebc@presence.lu

About the European Brain Council ...

The European Brain Council is A collaborative organisation covering all aspects of brain research and brain disorders in Europe. Established in 2002, EBC has a unique structure bringing together a host of European organisations with a specific interest in the brain. Members include pan-European bodies representing neurologists and psychiatrists, as well as patient federations in those respective fields, neurosurgeons, basic neuroscientists, and relevant areas of industry and commerce.

The founding members of EBC are:

- The European Federation of Neurological Associations (**EFNA**), which represents European-wide organisations for patients with neurological illnesses, such as the European Parkinson's Disease Association, Alzheimer Europe, European Dystonia Federation etc.
- The Global Alliance for Mental Illness Advocacy Networks (**GAMIAN-Europe**) represents associations of psychiatric patients.
- The European Federation of Neurological Societies (**EFNS**) represents national societies of neurologists throughout Europe
- The European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (**ECNP**) is a European-wide organisation of psychiatrists and pharmacologists and other basic scientists with an interest in neuropsychopharmacology.
- The European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (**EANS**) is a federation of national societies of neurosurgeons.
- The Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (**FENS**) represents basic neuroscientists.

The European Brain Council wants to have industry represented, but at present, industry does not have a joint European organization dealing with neuroscience. Until that happens, we accept individual companies to represent a whole branch of industry. To date, **GSK, Eli-Lilly** and **Medtronic** have accepted this invitation.

If your organization or company would like information about membership of the European Brain Council, please email us at ebc@presence.lu